

March 6, 2017

Co-chairs Kennedy, Miner, and Demicco, and esteemed leaders and members of the Environment Committee,

I care about animals, including wildlife. Please accept this testimony for the following bills:

1) I SUPPORT HB 6334, which would prevent inhumane conditions at animal shelters. The bill would license Connecticut's brick and mortar shelters, allow for their inspection, and require compliance with basic, humane facility standards and animal care practices. This would enable law enforcement to intervene, before situations deteriorate into inhumane, cruel conditions. Ultimately, these interventions will prevent the suffering of homeless pets, avoid costly animal cruelty cases.

2) I OPPOSE SB 522. This would allow bear hunting, which I strongly oppose. Hazing and teaching our communities to remove attractants from their properties (such as accessible garbage or pet food) are the humane, simple, and effective solutions to conflicts with wildlife. We must learn from what happened in other states that allowed bear hunts, such as New Jersey where over 600 bears were killed last year (even mothers and cubs and the popular bipedal bear, known to locals as "Pedals"), or Florida, where the state had to halt the hunt because too many bears were killed. The negative public reaction and press these horrific cases attracted is also not something we want for CT. With only around 700 bears in the entire state of Connecticut, we need to protect our bears from a similar outcome, and preserve these bears for future generations.

3) I SUPPORT HB 6335. This would prohibit sales of illegal ivory and rhino horn in Connecticut. The illegal trade of ivory and rhino horn is cruel, threatens the extinction of our most treasured mega-fauna, and is a known funding source for major terrorist organizations. On top of that is the impact to humans- over 1,000 park rangers have been killed by poachers. Other states have passed similar laws, and we here in the great state of Connecticut need to join them, lest we become a haven for illicit ivory. State bans like this are needed because ivory traffickers exploit federal loopholes.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer these perspectives.

Best regards,

Jennifer Wynn
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